

Chronic Wasting Disease Update

For specific regulations, season structure and tagging information, see the separate 2006 CWD Hunting Regulations pamphlet.

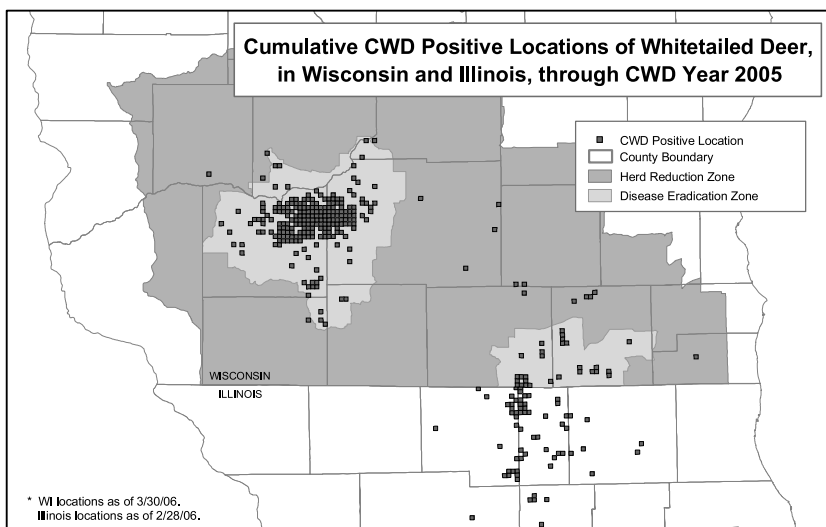
Note: Chronic wasting disease (CWD) belongs to a group of fatal diseases of animals known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies or TSEs. Other TSEs include scrapie in sheep, bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE, also called "mad cow disease") in cattle, and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease of humans. TSEs are thought to be caused by an abnormal form of a protein called a prion. Infection occurs by conversion of normal prion proteins into a disease-associated, misfolded form that is highly resistant to degradation. CWD is characterized by slow accumulation of abnormal prions in nervous and lymphatic tissues of deer, moose, and elk. Clinical signs of the disease typically appear after more than 1.5 years, as accumulation of prions causes microscopic holes in brain tissues. Animals in later stages of the disease exhibit behavioral changes and progressive weight loss. Currently, there are no proven treatments or vaccines for prion diseases and all infections are believed fatal.

The discovery of CWD in southern Wisconsin represents a significant threat to the state's white-tailed deer population and the culture of deer hunting in the state. Wisconsin has more than 700,000 deer hunters who have harvested an average of 460,000 deer annually during the past decade. Deer hunting contributes more than 7 million days of recreation each year. Deer hunting annually generates more than \$500 million dollars in retail sales and nearly \$1 billion in total impact to the state's economy. Deer are also important to non-hunters. In 2001, an estimated 2.2 million state residents participated in wildlife-watching activities and deer are among the most popular species for wildlife watching. In addition, nearly 300,000 nonresidents made trips to Wisconsin in 2001 to observe wildlife.

Wildlife disease experts have concluded that in the absence of management intervention, CWD will most likely increase in prevalence and distribution. There is no evidence that CWD will "burn itself out" if left alone. Further there is no evidence of genetic resistance to CWD in white-tailed deer or mule deer. A simulation model suggests that if left unmanaged over the next 10-30 years, CWD will spread widely throughout Wisconsin and will substantially increase in prevalence to more than 40% of adult deer. The model simulations are consistent with recent findings from Colorado that have shown increases in prevalence and distribution over the past few years in numerous local populations. Prevalence on some local winter ranges now exceeds 25-30%. In addition, the known affected area in both Colorado and Wyoming has expanded to the west and northwest more than 100 miles during the past 5 years.

Should the prevalence and distribution of CWD increase dramatically in Wisconsin, the disease could severely impact the social and economic stability of the communities that depend on hunting. A dramatic decrease in hunters could have significant effects on the economic vitality of rural communities that are dependent on hunting revenue, the preservation of cultural and family traditions, management and control of deer populations, wildlife agency revenue, and public support for wildlife management.

An extensive CWD surveillance program has been conducted starting in fall 2002. Through May 2006, over 100,000 deer have been tested from across the state. Sample intensity has been sufficient in the majority of the state to have a high



degree of confidence that CWD would have been detected if it exists at 1% prevalence. *This fall we will be doing a second round of disease testing in our West Central Region of the state. We encourage hunters to seek out those registration stations where we are sampling deer to help us check for CWD in that part of the state.* We found no positive deer during a similar effort in our Northeast Region in 2005 and we thank all the hunters who helped by bringing deer to us for testing.

As of May 2006, a total of 651 free-ranging deer have tested positive for CWD. Of these, 632 were from the Disease Eradication Zone and 19 were from the Herd Reduction Zone. The southeast cases are adjacent to an outbreak in northeastern Illinois where 142 CWD positive deer have been found since 2002.

Analysis of the sex and age composition of positive deer has shown that very few fawns are infected; only 13 out of more than 8,600 tested in the Disease Eradication Zone. Disease prevalence increases with age and the rate of increase is faster in males than in females. Only 2-3% of yearling females and males from the core area have tested positive for CWD. This increased to 4-5% of females and 10% of males for deer 2 years old or older.

Management programs to combat CWD should be regarded as long-term commitments of personnel and funding.

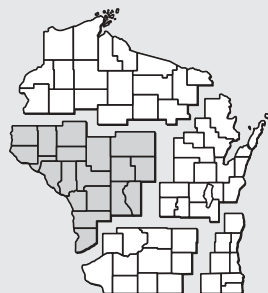
Successfully eradicating CWD from Wisconsin will require a sustained effort over many years, necessitating cooperation and communication among natural resource and agricultural agencies, hunters, landowners, and captive cervid producers. Although this will be a long-term effort, aggressive management early in the program is important to contain the spread of CWD, to minimize the size of the affected area and shorten the time required to eradicate the disease.

We offer our heartfelt thanks to all that are doing their part to help us control this disease in Wisconsin. We can not succeed without your help.

**The DNR will operate a toll-free CWD information line during regular business hours.
1-877-WISC-CWD (1-877-947-2293)**

2006 Deer Season Surveillance will be held in the West Central Region.

Counties where testing will occur include Adams, Buffalo, Chippewa, Clark, Crawford, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Marathon, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Portage, St. Croix, Trempealeau, Vernon, and Wood.

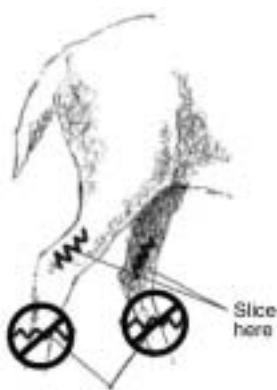


How to Hang a Deer by the Hind Legs

Due to the discovery of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in Wisconsin, thousands of deer heads are tested for the disease every year. In order to effectively monitor the disease, the Department conducts surveillance outside of the CWD zone. Each year, a different region outside of the infected area has registration stations collecting heads for sampling. We ask that hunters donate their deer heads to aid in the monitoring of CWD.

Hanging the deer from the hind legs is just as easy and efficient a way to process a deer as hanging the deer from the head.

We encourage you to use the hind leg hanging method so that the deer's head can be donated to surveillance efforts.



1. Cut a slit between the large, long tendon and bone of the hind legs. Be careful not to touch the musk gland for risk of tainting the meat with the musky smell. This gland is the tuft of long dark hair on the outside of each hind leg below the hock. Sawing the legs off is no longer recommended.

2. Insert an end of the gambrel into each of the slits. A "homemade" gambrel can easily be made from a sturdy wood or metal dowel. The gambrel should now be between the two hind legs.

3. Hoist the deer up using a pulley, rafter, tree branch, etc. so it is hanging head down. For information on how to butcher your deer, visit dnr.wi.gov.

*The practice of cutting through bone is no longer recommended. In addition, eating the viscera or internal organs of a deer is also not recommended.

Safe Handling of Deer

Chronic Wasting Disease has been known to occur in deer and elk in western states for decades. In spite of ongoing surveillance for similar diseases in humans, there has never been an instance of people contracting a CWD-related disease from butchering or eating venison.

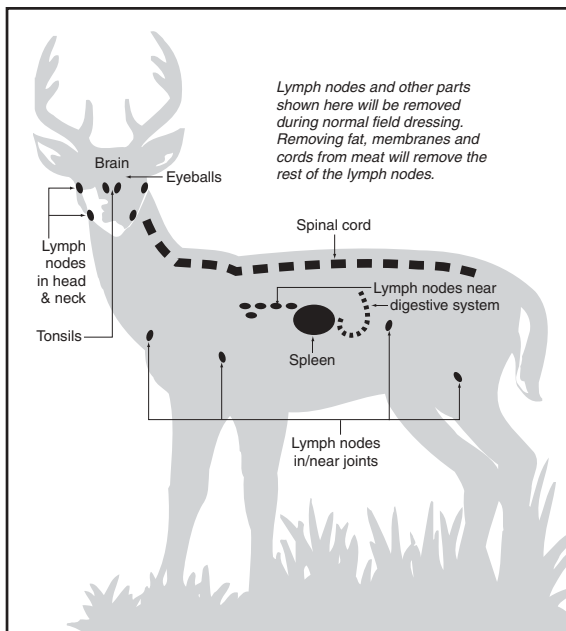
Experts suggest simple precautions that hunters field dressing deer and processors should take when handling deer in areas where CWD is found:

General Precautions

- Do not eat the eyes, brain, spinal cord, spleen, tonsils or lymph nodes of any deer.
- Do not eat any part of a deer that appears abnormal.
- If your deer is sampled for CWD testing, wait for test results before eating meat.

Hunters

- **Wear rubber or latex gloves** when field dressing carcasses.
- **Bone out the meat** from your animal.
- **Remove** all internal organs.
- **Minimize the handling** of brain, spinal cord, spleen and lymph nodes (lumps of tissue next to organs or in fat).
- **Do not use** household knives or utensils.
- **Use equipment dedicated** to field dressing only.
- **Clean knives and equipment** of residue and sanitize with household bleach. Use a solution of equal parts chlorine bleach and water. Wipe down countertops and let them dry. Soak items like knives one hour. When through, dilute the solution further and dump it down a drain.
- **Request that your animal be processed individually** and not combined with meat from other animals.
- **Avoid use of saws.** Do not cut through spine or skull except to remove the head. Use a knife designated only for this purpose.



Wisconsin Deer Donation 2006

Hunters, you can help feed needy people throughout Wisconsin this fall by taking five simple steps:

- Donate any legally harvested deer by dropping it off at a participating processor by January 7, 2007.
- Field dress the deer and register it at a Wisconsin DNR registration station prior to donating the deer.
- Call First! Contact one of the participating processors before dropping the deer off to verify the processor has space to accept your deer.
- Donate the entire deer to receive the processing for free (head and/or antlers may be removed for mounting).
- When dropping your deer off at a processor, please sign the simple log sheet indicating your desire to donate the deer. We'll do the rest. The donated deer will be processed and the venison will be distributed to charitable organizations to help feed Wisconsin's needy.

The 2006 deer donation program will begin accepting deer after August 1 to allow donations of deer shot under Agricultural Damage shooting permits. Hunters may make voluntary donations to help pay for the costs of deer processing when they buy their hunting license. Since 2002 hunters have donated over \$73,000 to help pay for deer processing for the needy.

Since the fall hunting season of 2000, hunters have donated over 42,000 deer which have provided nearly 2 million pounds of ground venison to needy families. A large network of volunteers including sports groups, church groups, civic organizations and food pantry staff work together to distribute the meat from the processors to the food pantries. USDA - Wildlife Services staff, DNR Wildlife Damage staff and county wildlife damage staff also help administer the program. Hunt For The Hungry, headed by Lee Dudek of northeast Wisconsin is also a strong partner in the 2006 Wisconsin Deer Donation program.

Please check our website <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/damage/donation/mainindex.htm> for updates. Information on participating processors will be updated as soon as counties complete the contracts and forward this information to us. Thank you for your interest and good luck hunting!

Funded by Wisconsin's Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/damage/donation/mainindex.htm>

Be Responsible. Dispose of your deer carcasses properly.

Leaving deer carcasses on state owned land or along roadways is illegal.

Check with your local waste management facility for instructions on proper disposal.